

SEP 14 2006

Appl. No. 10/619,972
Amdt. dated September 14, 2006Reply to Office Action of June 15, 2006
Attorney Docket 12622**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 4-5, 7-14 and 17-23 are currently pending for examination. Claims 1, 17, 18 and 21 are amended. Claims 2 and 24 are cancelled. No new matter is added. Claim 24 was objected to, but was indicated to be allowable if rewritten into independent form. Claim 1 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 24 to place claim 1 in condition for allowance. Claims 17, 18 and 21 are amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 24 to place claims 17, 18 and 21 in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing remarks.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indication that claim 24 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 5, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,705,067 to Schroeder et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Schroeder") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,480,397 to Vachon (hereinafter referred to as "Vachon") and U.S. Patent No. 4,421,188 to Fredriksen et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Fredriksen").

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder and Vachon as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Fredriksen.

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Claims 4, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder, Vachon and Fredriksen as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Ensink.

Claims 9, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder, Vachon, Fredriksen and Ensink as applied above, and further in view of Stauffer.

Claims 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder and Vachon in view of Copley.

Claims 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder and Vachon in view of Hurlburt.

Claims 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder in view of Vachon as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Powell.

Claim 1 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 24 to place claim 1 in condition for allowance. Claims 4, 5, 7-14 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Claim 17 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 24 to place claim 17 in condition for allowance. Claim 18 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 24 to place claim 18 in condition for allowance. Claims 19-20 depend from claim 18 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 18. Claim 21 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 24 to place claim 21 in condition for allowance. Claims 22-23 depend from claim 21 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 21. Accordingly, allowance of claims 1, 4-5, 7-14 and 17-23 is respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 4-5, 7-14 and 17-23 define patentable subject matter. A Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

No fee is believed due with this communication. Nevertheless, should the Examiner consider any fees to be payable in conjunction with this or any future communication, authorization is given to direct payment of such fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-0780. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it would help expedite matters.

Respectfully submitted,



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